



EARTH, WIND & FIRE performs atop a float celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Forum at the Rose Parade on Monday in Pasadena.

Amid roses, a respite

Parade offers an escape from politics after a year of protests and tumult

By JACLYN COSGROVE, HAILEY BRANSON-POTTS, MICHAEL LIVINGSTON AND ALEJANDRA REYES-VELARDE

It was the kind of famously mild Southern California winter day that would make any shivering East Coaster jealous. The sky was a picture-perfect blue, the sun shone bright and the flower-covered floats delighted with a kaleidoscope of color as tens of thousands of people rang in the new year at the 129th Rose Parade in Pasadena. While revelers in New York's Times Square welcomed 2018 during the city's second-coldest New Year's Eve on record — a frigid 10 degrees — Rose Parade spectators were treated to relatively balmy temperatures in the mid-50s. “We complain because we can, but we have the best weather,” said Riverside resident Maria Romo, who wore a stocking cap and a heavy coat as she stoked a fire in a barbecue grill after camping overnight on Colorado Boulevard. “This is why we live on

the West Coast.” After a tumultuous year of political division and protests from coast to coast, New Year's Day at the Rose Parade was a wholesome respite, largely exempt from the cultural wars. Aside from a few street preachers telling people they were going to hell — as they do every year — and a small group of demonstrators calling for healthcare for all and toting a huge image of Bernie Sanders at the end of the parade, the atmosphere was placid. The Rose Bowl game brought legions of football fans from Oklahoma and Georgia, two traditionally conservative states, to famously liberal California. But politics were far from spectators' minds, and people instead commented on each other's kindness. “Everyone is so nice,” said Diana Camacho, 16, of Costa Mesa. “You don't usually have people crossing the street to just say hi.” The hours-long parade, themed “Making a Difference,” went off without any significant security issues. Scores of campers, bundled in blankets and huddled around propane heaters, spent the night along the 5.5-mile route. Diana, her parents and her 19-year-old sister, Desiree, camped along Colorado in Winnie the Pooh-themed onesie pajamas. [See **Rose Parade**, A6]



LUCAS WRIGHT, 6, left, Payson Wright, 9, and Ephram Wright, 11, get comfortable while they wait for floats to make their way down Colorado Boulevard.



TAKING OFF IN PASADENA Georgia players celebrate after defeating Oklahoma, 54-48, in double overtime in the Rose Bowl. Georgia will play for the national championship Jan. 8 against Alabama, which beat Clemson, 24-6, in the Sugar Bowl. **SPORTS, D1**

‘A new future’ for pot begins

As legalization takes effect in California, crowds swarm shops

By MARISA GERBER

“Groove on! Groove on!” blared from speakers outside a gray warehouse in Santa Ana. Inside, a line of 60 people snaked through the shop, waiting to be helped by a “budtender.” “We were bombarded!” said Robert Taft Jr., founder of the marijuana dispensary 420 Central. When the shop opened at 7 a.m. Monday — Day 1 of legal recreational pot sales in California — a handful of people were already lined up. Within two hours, more than 100 customers, some still nursing holiday hangovers, had made purchases. As they walked out, Taft



BOB AND JUDY Malgeri shop at 420 Central in Santa Ana, the closest city to L.A. selling pot Monday.

shouted, “Enjoy your new freedom!” Californians voted to legalize recreational marijuana in 2016, and the historic law permitting such businesses took effect New Year's Day — creating the largest legal pot market in the country. Hundreds of businesses have applied for temporary licenses, but industry officials expect a slow rollout as many cities have not yet given their approval. While the city of L.A. hasn't begun issuing licenses to pot shops, some dispensaries are expected to open in West Hollywood on Tuesday. On Monday, San Francisco businesses weren't open for commercial sales of [See **Legal pot**, A12]

Iran unrest death toll rises to 13

Demonstrations that began over rising prices and persistent unemployment have spread to more than 25 cities and taken aim at the ruling establishment. **WORLD, A3**

Cable news gets a Trump bounce

Ratings climb for Fox News, MSNBC and CNN, and analysts credit widespread interest in the president's unpredictability. **BUSINESS, C1**

Weather Partly cloudy. L.A. Basin: 76/56. **B6**



GOP agenda will be uphill climb

With a slimmer majority, Republicans prepare to take on crucial, long-stalled priorities in 2018.

By LISA MASCARO

WASHINGTON — Congress returns to work this week with unfinished business on spending, immigration and other crucial issues, but with an even narrower GOP majority that will make it tougher to move on President Trump's agenda. The House and Senate will convene Wednesday, swearing in the newly elected Democratic senator from Alabama, Doug Jones, and Minnesota's Tina Smith to replace a fellow Democrat, Sen. Al Franken, who is resigning as the latest high-profile public figure sidelined by allegations of sexual misconduct. The change gives Republicans only a one-seat margin in the Senate. Trump, fresh off passage of the GOP tax cuts, is pushing lawmakers to pivot quickly on his new year priorities of infrastructure investment and immigration, as well as his foreign policy agenda. But another legislative victory seems far off. Republicans have struggled to hold their majority together, and Congress first must tackle crucial stalled agenda items that leaders punted to 2018. In the short run, Congress must fund the government by Jan. 19 or face a potential federal shutdown when a temporary spending measure expires that was hastily approved before lawmakers recessed for the [See **Congress**, A9]

Can Xi's party build a better city?

By JESSICA MEYERS

RONGCHENG, China — Farmers often stop to stare at the cement trucks running through their cornfields outside this dusty, frigid town south of Beijing. They're watching the destruction of their livelihoods for the promise of a more prosperous future. Chinese President Xi Jinping stood in nearby fields in April to herald a project “crucial for the next millennium.” Officials described a massive high-tech hub three times the size of New York City that would resuscitate poor areas and transform how China builds urban centers. They called it Xiongan, “magnificent peace.” The country's sprawling propaganda apparatus compared it in significance to Shenzhen, the wealthy southern metropolis where China first loosened suffocating Mao-era controls and dealt itself in as an aggressive new player in the global economy. Xi, the most authoritarian leader since Mao Tse-tung, envisions Xiongan as the next chapter of the four- [See **China**, A4]